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# AREI UPDATES: Agricultural Input Trade

## Updates on Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators

Natural Resources and Environment Division  
Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

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### U.S. Exports and Imports of Agricultural Inputs, 1990-94

- During 1990-94, U.S. exports of fertilizers, pesticides, seeds for planting, and farm machinery all exceeded imports. Trade surpluses in these agricultural inputs in 1993-94 were highest for farm machinery.
- Annual fertilizer exports averaged \$2.5 billion (mostly to Asia), farm machinery exports \$3.0 billion (mainly to Canada and Western Europe), pesticide exports \$1.3 billion (primarily to Western Europe) and seed exports \$0.7 billion (largely to Western Europe, Canada, and Mexico).
- Annual fertilizer imports averaged \$1.6 billion (mostly from Canada), farm machinery imports \$2.1 billion (primarily from Western Europe and Japan), pesticide imports \$0.7 billion (mainly from Western Europe), and seed imports \$0.4 billion (largely from Canada, Chile, and Netherlands).

This issue of AREI UPDATES summarizes U.S. agricultural input trade as compiled from data collected by the U.S. Department of Commerce. The products included in the major agricultural input categories are described in the ERS publication, *Foreign Agricultural Trade of the United States*, fiscal-year supplement.

**Fertilizer**—The United States is a major exporter of phosphate and nitrogen products and a major importer of potash. The value of fertilizer exports has varied in recent years from \$3.0 billion in 1991 to \$1.8 billion in 1993. The share of U.S. exports to Eastern

and Western Europe has fallen while the shares to North and South America and Asia have grown. Canada, Mexico, and Trinidad-Tobago are the primary sources of fertilizer imports.

**Pesticides**—The value of U.S. exports remained stable at \$1.3 billion whereas imports grew from nearly \$0.5 billion to \$0.7 billion. Herbicide products dominated both imports and exports. Proportionately, exports to Western Europe fell while those to North and South American countries increased. Pesticide import shares by region remained stable.

**Farm Machinery**—Exports increased from \$2.9 billion in 1990 to over \$3.4 billion in 1994, while imports rose from \$2.2 billion to \$2.6 billion. Exports were mostly large tractors and self-propelled combines while imports included smaller tractors and other equipment. Major export and import countries were Canada, UK, Germany, and Japan.

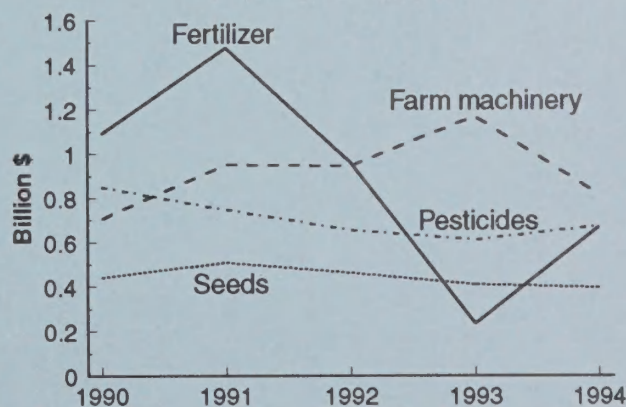
**Seed**—The value of exports reached around \$0.67 billion in 1991 and 1992 then declined to \$0.62 billion in 1993 and 1994. Corn, forage, and vegetable seeds were the major exports by value. Annual seed imports were valued at \$0.5 billion in 1991 and 1992 but declined to \$0.4 billion in 1993 and 1994. Vegetable seeds are the major seed import category. Seed imports from Asia fell relative to those from South America and Western Europe.

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#### About AREI UPDATES

**AREI UPDATES** is a periodic series that supplements and updates information in **Agricultural Resources and Environmental Indicators (AREI)**, USDA, ERS, AH-705, Dec. 1994. **UPDATES** report recent data from surveys of farm operators and others knowledgeable about changing agricultural resource use and conditions, with only minimal interpretation or analysis. Please contact the individuals listed at the end of the text for additional information about the data in this **UPDATE**. If you would like to be added to the mailing list or have other questions about **AREI UPDATES** or **AREI**, contact Richard Magleby, (202) 219-0436.

Net U.S. exports of agricultural inputs  
(Exports less imports)



Source: U. S. Department of Commerce data.

Table 1—Value and regional and country shares of U. S. fertilizer exports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	2,606	3,013	2,407	1,832	2,728
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	12.4	11.5	15.5	21.8	16.3
Canada	7.3	6.6	8.3	11.5	7.4
Mexico	2.0	1.9	3.6	6.9	5.7
Costa Rica	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.9
Other	2.5	2.3	2.8	2.4	2.3
South America	9.1	9.3	12.0	12.6	13.4
Colombia	1.5	1.2	1.3	1.7	1.7
Venezuela	1.2	0.6	1.1	0.6	0.5
Brazil	2.8	3.5	4.4	4.8	6.3
Argentina	0.7	0.9	1.4	1.4	1.4
Other	2.9	3.0	3.8	4.1	3.5
Western Europe	10.9	8.3	6.0	4.4	4.2
Netherlands	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.8	0.4
Belgium and Luxembourg	3.8	2.6	0.5	0.4	1.0
France	2.2	1.9	2.0	0.3	0.7
Germany	1.4	0.9	1.3	1.2	1.1
Other EC-12	1.6	1.5	1.4	1.1	0.9
Total EC-12	10.3	7.7	5.9	3.8	4.1
Other Western Europe	0.6	0.6	0.1	0.6	0.2
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	8.3	4.3	0.7	0.1	0.0
Asia	52.7	60.8	58.5	49.5	57.7
India	11.5	11.5	10.9	9.3	4.8
China	20.9	32.6	26.2	16.0	34.6
Korea, Republic of	3.2	2.5	3.3	4.9	2.6
Japan	6.8	6.1	6.8	8.9	6.8
Other	10.3	8.1	11.3	10.4	8.8
Oceania	5.2	4.8	6.3	9.2	7.4
Australia	4.5	4.3	5.4	7.0	5.9
Other Oceania	0.8	0.5	1.0	2.2	1.6
Africa	1.4	1.1	1.0	2.4	1.0
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 2—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. fertilizer imports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	1,512	1,536	1,444	1,596	2,062
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	83.4	83.7	82.7	74.3	73.3
Canada	66.2	63.9	66.6	61.3	54.7
Mexico	11.4	11.7	9.1	4.3	7.1
Trinidad-Tobago	5.8	8.0	7.0	8.6	11.5
Other	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
South America	2.7	2.2	2.9	4.3	2.4
Venezuela	1.0	0.6	0.2	1.6	0.9
Brazil	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.9	0.4
Other	1.6	1.6	2.5	1.8	1.2
Western Europe	6.8	6.1	5.9	7.0	4.9
Netherlands	1.8	1.3	0.7	1.5	1.2
Belgium and Luxembourg	0.7	0.5	0.8	1.1	0.7
Germany	2.2	2.1	1.5	1.7	1.1
Other EC-12	0.9	0.4	1.2	1.2	0.5
Total EC-12	5.5	4.3	4.2	5.4	3.5
Other Western Europe	1.3	1.8	1.7	1.5	1.5
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	4.1	5.6	6.7	9.3	14.0
Asia	2.9	2.2	1.6	4.0	4.1
Israel	2.0	1.3	0.9	1.5	0.4
Saudi Arabia	0.2	0.2	0.0	0.6	1.9
Other	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.9	1.8
Oceania	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0
Africa	0.1	0.1	0.0	1.2	1.3
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 3—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. pesticide exports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	1,344	1,226	1,265	1,259	1,369
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	26.3	26.8	27.4	30.1	33.9
Canada	18.5	17.9	18.0	20.3	23.7
Mexico	2.9	3.8	3.5	4.4	5.3
Costa Rica	1.5	1.7	2.1	1.9	1.6
Other	3.5	3.5	3.8	3.6	3.3
South America	11.0	13.7	13.2	13.7	19.8
Colombia	2.5	2.2	1.6	1.8	2.0
Brazil	2.9	4.6	3.9	4.3	9.3
Argentina	1.6	2.5	2.9	4.1	5.5
Other	4.0	4.3	4.7	3.6	3.0
Western Europe	37.2	30.1	25.7	26.2	23.5
United Kingdom	2.1	3.3	4.1	4.0	2.7
Netherlands	9.1	7.4	4.2	4.8	2.8
Belgium	11.7	8.5	7.6	7.5	6.4
France	6.5	4.3	5.1	4.4	4.8
Germany	3.7	3.4	2.2	2.1	2.8
Other EC-12	2.4	2.1	1.5	1.8	1.7
Total EC-12	35.5	29.1	24.6	24.6	21.1
Switzerland	1.6	0.9	1.1	1.5	2.3
Other Western Europe	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	0.4	0.4	0.0	2.1	0.5
Asia	20.4	24.7	26.5	22.1	17.7
Singapore	1.0	1.1	1.9	1.0	0.9
China	1.1	1.9	1.1	0.8	1.1
South Korea	2.6	2.3	2.7	2.3	1.8
Taiwan	1.3	1.5	1.5	1.8	1.3
Japan	7.5	11.4	11.6	8.5	6.9
Other	6.9	6.5	7.7	7.7	5.7
Oceania	3.0	2.7	4.0	3.4	2.6
Australia	2.6	2.3	3.6	2.9	2.1
Other	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.5	0.5
Africa	1.8	1.6	3.2	2.3	1.9
Rep. S. Africa	1.1	0.9	1.5	1.2	1.2
Other	0.7	1.5	1.7	1.1	0.8
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 4—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. pesticide imports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	496	517	611	649	698
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	7.7	7.5	7.1	9.1	9.2
Canada	3.6	4.2	5.1	7.3	8.1
Mexico	2.7	2.6	1.4	1.2	0.6
Other	1.4	0.8	0.6	0.6	0.4
South America	9.7	11.8	9.8	6.9	5.6
Colombia	1.2	.2	1.2	0.8	0.8
Brazil	5.9	9.0	6.9	4.4	3.3
Argentina	1.7	1.4	1.2	1.4	1.1
Other	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Western Europe	62.3	57.6	57.2	62.7	60.7
United Kingdom	12.7	14.3	15.8	18.5	18.6
Netherlands	4.3	2.2	3.8	3.8	3.2
Belgium	9.2	3.5	5.8	4.1	3.3
France	7.3	7.2	6.4	6.0	5.5
Germany	21.0	21.6	18.3	18.0	19.2
Italy	4.4	3.3	3.7	6.7	4.9
Other EC-12	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
Total EC-12	59.2	52.3	53.6	57.2	54.7
Switzerland	1.7	4.0	2.5	3.5	4.2
Other Western Europe	1.5	1.3	1.1	2.0	1.7
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	0.1	0.3	0.5	1.0	0.6
Asia	18.7	20.3	22.7	17.5	20.4
Israel	5.3	6.4	5.3	6.5	7.7
Japan	11.9	11.9	15.3	9.1	11.6
Other	1.5	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0
Oceania	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6
Australia	1.1	1.4	1.4	1.6	1.6
Africa	0.4	1.1	1.4	1.4	2.1
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 5—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. farm machinery exports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	2,943	2,705	2,804	3,144	3,413
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	43.0	40.4	42.5	47.4	48.2
Canada	32.1	28.3	31.0	36.5	35.9
Mexico	7.9	8.5	8.0	8.0	9.4
Other	3.0	3.6	3.6	2.9	2.9
South America	5.2	7.9	8.3	6.3	7.2
Colombia	0.8	0.9	0.9	1.0	1.2
Argentina	0.4	0.8	1.1	1.1	1.9
Other	4.1	6.2	6.4	4.2	4.1
Western Europe	26.4	26.1	22.2	18.9	17.7
United Kingdom	5.3	3.7	3.5	3.6	3.5
Netherlands	1.3	1.9	1.3	0.9	1.4
France	4.9	4.6	3.8	3.1	3.2
Germany	3.6	5.2	4.4	5.1	4.3
Other EC-12	9.7	9.5	8.0	5.2	4.4
Total EC-12	24.8	24.8	21.0	17.9	16.8
Other Western Europe	1.5	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.0
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	1.5	1.2	1.1	2.2	2.4
Asia	14.1	17.1	16.9	15.2	12.0
Singapore	1.9	2.3	2.1	2.1	2.1
China	0.5	1.0	1.4	1.7	1.1
South Korea	1.0	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.2
Japan	3.7	4.0	3.3	2.8	3.1
Other	7.0	8.5	9.4	7.6	4.5
Oceania	7.0	4.8	6.1	7.0	8.3
Australia	6.7	4.5	5.7	6.5	7.8
Other	0.4	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.5
Africa	2.7	2.5	2.7	3.1	4.2
Rep. S. Africa	1.3	1.4	1.3	1.4	1.9
Other	1.4	1.1	1.4	1.7	2.3
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 6—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. farm machinery imports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	2,237	1,754	1,860	1,976	2,596
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	24.7	22.2	19.9	23.9	23.4
Canada	23.3	20.5	18.1	21.8	21.1
Mexico	1.4	1.7	1.7	2.1	2.3
South America	1.1	1.4	1.3	1.2	0.9
Western Europe	63.2	62.7	61.5	56.6	55.7
United Kingdom	17.7	16.3	15.3	17.1	16.0
Netherlands	1.7	1.7	1.7	2.0	1.7
Belgium	6.0	3.1	2.5	1.3	1.3
France	5.6	5.5	5.0	4.9	4.7
Germany	22.8	25.4	24.8	18.1	17.0
Italy	6.7	8.5	9.3	10.4	11.9
Other EC-12	1.4	1.3	1.6	1.7	1.9
Total EC-12	61.9	61.7	60.2	55.3	54.6
Other Western Europe	1.3	1.0	1.4	1.2	1.1
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	2.6	3.0	3.9	3.2	3.5
Asia	7.8	10.0	12.4	13.9	15.7
Japan	5.1	6.2	6.8	8.2	9.9
Other	2.7	3.9	5.6	5.7	5.8
Oceania	0.5	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.6
Africa	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.2	0.2
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

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Table 7—Value and regional and country share of U.S. seed exports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	588	672	669	619	621
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	26.4	24.8	30.7	33.7	31.7
Canada	10.2	10.0	11.3	11.8	11.9
Mexico	14.4	13.2	17.8	20.1	18.0
Other	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.8	1.8
South America	4.3	4.1	5.6	7.4	8.1
Argentina	1.7	1.4	3.0	3.0	4.1
Chile	0.6	0.6	0.6	1.0	1.1
Other	1.9	2.0	2.0	3.5	2.9
Western Europe	40.7	42.3	36.1	30.3	30.3
United Kingdom	1.9	1.7	1.7	1.4	1.4
Netherlands	4.9	6.1	4.4	4.7	4.7
France	7.4	7.2	6.3	6.1	4.9
Germany	1.7	3.0	1.9	1.8	2.8
Spain	3.4	2.5	2.4	2.0	2.3
Italy	16.8	16.2	14.8	10.7	10.0
Greece	1.4	2.0	1.3	1.8	2.8
Other EC-12	1.9	2.5	2.1	1.1	1.1
Other Western Europe	1.3	1.0	1.4	.7	.2
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	2.0	3.7	1.6	7.2	5.4
Romania	0.8	1.5	0.5	2.0	2.2
Ukraine	-	0.0	0.0	4.7	0.5
Other	1.2	2.2	1.1	0.6	2.7
Asia	22.3	21.2	21.6	17.1	20.9
Saudi Arabia	10.0	9.4	7.9	2.3	2.6
Hong Kong	-	-	-	0.4	2.6
Japan	7.8	7.1	8.1	8.2	9.0
South Korea	0.6	0.7	0.9	1.2	1.7
Other	3.9	4.0	4.7	4.9	5.0
Africa	2.7	2.5	2.9	3.0	2.1
Oceania	1.5	1.4	1.4	1.3	1.7
Australia	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.3
Other	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.3	0.3
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

Table 8—Value and regional and country shares of U.S. seed imports

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
	\$ Million				
Total value	147	164	206	208	227
Regional and country shares:	Percent of value				
North and Central America	33.4	31.4	32.6	31.2	33.9
Canada	26.1	24.9	25.4	22.8	27.2
Mexico	3.4	3.8	3.2	4.5	3.1
Guatemala	2.7	2.5	3.8	3.5	3.3
Other	1.3	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3
South America	12.3	11.7	21.2	17.2	18.9
Chile	11.2	10.7	17.2	13.5	15.7
Argentina	1.0	0.7	3.6	3.3	2.8
Other	0.1	0.3	0.4	0.5	0.4
Western Europe	15.6	18.1	16.2	21.7	18.7
Denmark	1.4	1.2	1.7	2.6	1.3
Netherlands	9.3	10.7	8.7	12.3	10.6
France	1.4	1.8	1.7	2.2	2.4
Germany	1.6	2.2	2.0	2.5	2.4
Italy	1.0	1.2	1.2	0.9	0.9
Other EC-12	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.9	0.9
Other Western Europe	0.1	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.3
Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union	0.8	0.1	0.5	1.7	1.9
Asia	30.5	31.3	22.4	21.1	20.0
India	3.1	5.2	2.7	1.8	1.9
Thailand	5.4	5.3	4.0	2.8	2.0
Taiwan	4.8	3.5	3.6	1.8	0.8
Japan	7.6	7.8	6.2	9.0	7.7
China (Mainland)	6.8	9.0	5.5	4.8	6.0
Other	2.9	0.5	0.4	0.8	1.5
Africa	0.9	1.3	1.1	1.4	1.0
Oceania	6.4	5.5	4.5	4.6	3.1
Australia	2.2	1.9	2.0	1.4	1.9
New Zealand	4.2	3.5	2.5	3.2	1.2
World	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Compiled from U.S. Department of Commerce data by USDA, ERS.

## SUMMARY OF REPORT #AER-719

# Regulations Encourage Reduced Number, Toxicity of New Pesticides

June 1995

Contact: Michael Ollinger (202) 501-7418

**P**esticide regulation in the United States has encouraged fewer, yet less toxic, new chemical pesticides. The number of new chemical pesticides registered by the EPA dropped by 49 percent between the 1972-76 and 1987-91 periods, and those with chronic health effects dropped by 86 percent between the 1972-76 and 1985-89 periods. The findings of a new report from USDA's Economic Research Service, *World Agriculture and Climate Change: Economic Adaptations* (AER-703), also suggest that pesticide regulations have encouraged firms to focus their chemical pesticide research on pesticides for larger crop markets and abandon pesticide development for smaller crop markets.

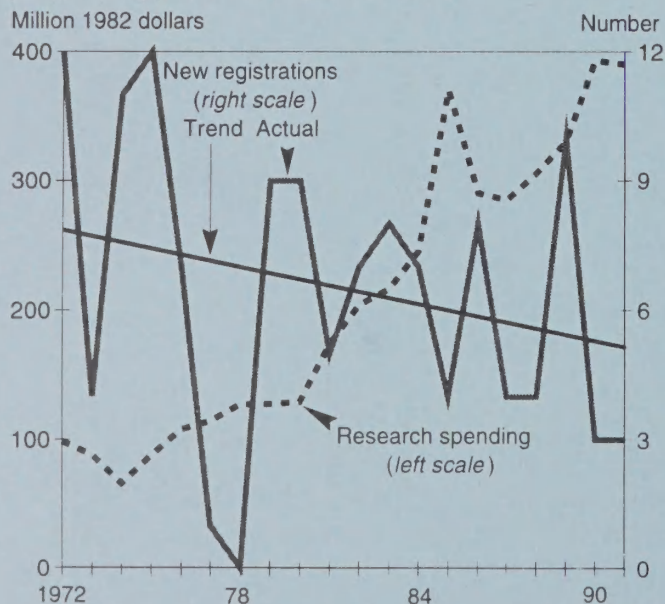
Concern over the health and environmental effects of chemical pesticide use caused Congress to enact major amendments to the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA) in 1972, 1978, and 1988. These amendments required that new and existing pesticides

meet strict health and environmental standards. As a result, pesticide companies have refocused their research on pesticides that degrade rapidly and have stopped developing pesticides that persist in the environment. The low-toxicity pesticides now account for more than half of sales of new pesticides.

The findings of this report also suggest that EPA chemical pesticide regulation has indirectly affected the number and type of pesticide firms. Each 10-percent increase in new pesticide regulatory costs causes a 2.7-percent reduction in the number of new pesticides. Higher regulatory costs contributed to an industrywide increase in research spending. This increase encouraged some small firms (companies with sales below the industry average) to leave the chemical pesticide industry. Although the exit of some companies has reduced the potential for greater innovation, the firms that remain are those better able to exist in a more stringent regulatory environment and, perhaps, more likely to develop less toxic pesticides.

### Research spending, new chemical pesticide registrations, and pesticide regulation

Closer regulation of pesticides has contributed to a tripling of research costs and a 75-percent decline in pesticides approved for use since 1972.



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